## M E M O R A N D U M August 7, 2013

TO: Landmarks Board

**FROM:** Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager

Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner Nicholas Wharton, Historic Preservation Intern

**SUBJECT:** Public hearing and consideration of a demolition permit for the

building located at 428 Pleasant St., a non-landmarked building over 50 years old, pursuant to per Section 9-11-23 of the Boulder Revised

Code (HIS2013-00132).

#### **STATISTICS:**

1. Site: 428 Pleasant Street

2. Date of Construction: c.1908

3. Zoning: RL-1 (Residential Low 1)

Lot Size: 6,477 square feet
 Owner/Applicant: Cooper Schell

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Community Planning and Sustainability Department (CP&S) recommends that the Landmarks Board adopt the following motion:

I move that the Landmarks Board issue a stay of demolition for the building located at 428 Pleasant Street, for a period not to exceed 180 days from the day the permit application was filed, adopting the staff memorandum with the findings as listed below, in order to further explore alternatives to demolishing the building. Staff encourages the applicant to consider landmark designation of the structure and incorporation into redevelopment plans for the site. A 180-day stay period would expire on January 6, 2013.

Should the board choose to issue the demolition permit, or if the permit is allowed to expire, staff recommends that prior to demolition the following be submitted to CP&S staff for review, approval and recording with Carnegie Library:

- 1. A site plan showing the location of all existing improvements on the subject property;
- 2. Measured elevation drawings of all faces of the building depicting existing conditions, fully annotated with architectural details and materials indicated on the plans; and
- 3. Black and white medium format archival quality photographs of all exterior elevations.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

On June 5, 2013, the Community Planning and Sustainability Department received a demolition permit application for the house at 428 Pleasant St. The building is not in a designated historic district or locally landmarked, but is over 50 years old and meets the criteria for demolition defined under Section 9-11-23 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. A demolition permit application for the property was reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board in 2002. The application was approved after no alternatives to demolition were found during a 180-day stay of demolition. On December 19, 2012, the Landmarks design review committee (Ldrc) referred the current application to the Landmarks Board for a public hearing, finding there was "probable cause to consider that the building may be eligible for designation as an individual landmark."

#### PURPOSE OF THE BOARD'S REVIEW:

Pursuant to section 9-11-23(d)(2), B.R.C. 1981, demolition requests for all buildings built prior to 1940 require review by the Landmarks design review committee (Ldrc). The Ldrc is comprised of two members of the Landmarks Board and a staff member. If, during the course of its review, the Ldrc determines that there is "probable cause to consider the property may be eligible for designation as an individual landmark," the issuance of the permit is stayed for up to 60 days from the date that a completed application was accepted by the city and the permit is referred to the board for a public hearing. Section 9-11-23(d)(2), B.R.C. 1981.

If the Landmarks Board finds that the building proposed for demolition may have significance under the criteria in subsection (f) of Section 9-11-23, B.R.C. 1981, the application shall be suspended for a period not to exceed 180 days from the date the permit application was accepted by the city manager as complete, in order to provide the time necessary to consider alternatives to the building's demolition. Sec. 9-11-23(g). If imposed, a 180-day stay period would start when the completed application was accepted by the city manager (July 10, 2013, when the Landmarks Board hearing fee was paid) and would expire on January 6, 2013.

#### PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

The subject property, Lot 5, Block 5, of the Vermont Addition, is located on the south side of Pleasant Street between Jay and Marshall Streets. The 6,477 square feet property is situated within the expanded boundaries of the identified potential Highland Lawn Historic District, as identified in the 2010 update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.



Figure 1: Property Location Map, 428 Pleasant Street.

The 1,226 square foot house at 428 Pleasant Street remains relatively intact, with only one addition to the rear. The house is nearly square in plan with a pyramidal hipped roof, a small hipped dormer with a boarded up window opening, and wide, enclosed overhanging eaves. A central chimney extends from the roof at its peak. The walls are clad in horizontal clapboard siding and corner boards. The north elevation features hipped roof porch with turned spindle supports, and remnants of a lattice screen underneath. The wood paneled door at the east end of the north elevation has a large window and does not appear to be original. A tall, narrow window and two paired windows are located at the far west of the front elevation. All three of these windows are double-hung, 1/1 light widows with removable screens, and simple flat dressings.

The retaining walls along Pleasant Street and the foundation of the house use local stone in a loose rubble arrangement. The foundation on the west elevation has been replaced with concrete and three windows and a walk-out entry. The rear addition, believed to be

constructed in c.1970, features vertical siding, a rough concrete foundation, and a storm cellar entry.

The house at 428 Pleasant appears to retain a high degree of architectural integrity, though it is in a state of disrepair. (*See Attachment D: Existing Photographs*). The 1994 survey data on this building lists "porch walls new; new stairs and railing: some window alterations." (*See Attachment A: Historic Building Inventory Form.*) The porch walls have since been removed, revealing a low railing that appears original. The front stairs appear original, though the handrail is of recent construction. The wood, double-hung windows of the front elevation appear original to the house. The windows on the east elevation however, do not appear historic. The house retains its original wooden lap siding. The rear shed addition is not original, having vertical siding and a concrete foundation in contrast to the original structure's horizontal drop siding and stone foundation. No building permit exists for the rear addition, but since it does not appear on the real estate re-appraisal of 1966, it is a non-historic addition.



Figure 2: Assessor Card Photo, 428 Pleasant, 1938.(See Attachment C, Tax Assessor Card).



Figure 3: North Elevation, 428 Pleasant St., 2013.



Figure 4: West Elevation, 428 Pleasant St., 2013.



Figure 5: East Elevation, 428 Pleasant St., 2013.

#### **HISTORY:**

The house at 428 Pleasant is located in the Vermont addition to Boulder which was platted in 1902 by M. J. Hapgood, after whom a street in the subdivision is named. The addition is roughly bounded by Anderson Ditch on the north, 6th Street to the east, College Avenue to the south, and the foothills to the west. Developer Henry Sahm purchased several lots from Hapgood in 1902 and built 428 Pleasant on Lot 5 of Block 5. Sahm managed the house as a rental property until 1919.

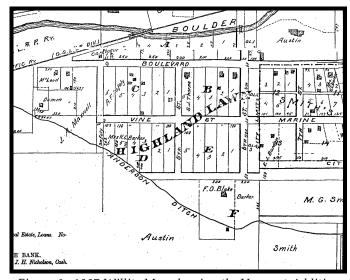
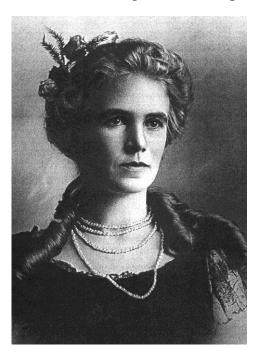


Figure 6: 1887 Willits Map showing the Vermont Addition

The house has been occupied by a number of renters throughout its history. The first resident listed at this address was Logan W. Miller, a "railroader," who lived there in 1908. The most significant occupants of the house were May and George Oles, residents



of the house from 1911 until c.1915. May Oles, the adopted daughter of prominent Boulder citizen Andrew Macky, returned to Boulder in 1907 to contest his will. The high-profile case lasted over a decade and was a factor in the delay of the construction of Macky Auditorium at the University of Colorado. Her husband, George Oles, was an internationally known composer.

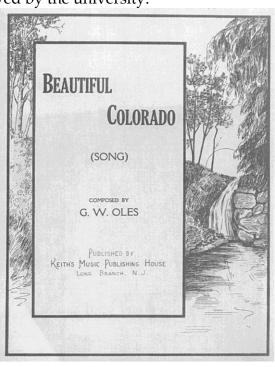
May Oles, nee Moina May Bradford, was born in Boulder in 1873. By 1885, she had been given by her parents to the care of Andrew J. Macky, who had arrived in Boulder in 1860 and was instrumental in the early development of the city. In 1897, she married University of Colorado law graduate William C. Rooney and later moved with him to

Canon City. What happened to Rooney is unclear, but May returned to Boulder in 1907 with a new husband, George W. Oles.<sup>1</sup>

G. W. Oles was born in Titusville, PA, in 1863. He studied music in New York and toured as a solo and first chair violinist, winning wide acclaim in newspapers such as the Detroit *Journal* and the Wichita *Mirror*.<sup>2</sup> Oles came to Boulder to compose, and quickly became active in public life. He directed the Elks Juvenile Orchestra, co-founded and directed the Boulder City Band, and toured the state with both groups. In 1920, he played for Franklin D. Roosevelt, during the future president's visit to Boulder. He also penned numerous compositions while living in Boulder, including *Moonlight Melody*, *Beautiful Colorado*, and the piece performed by the U.S. Marine Corps band and broadcast by CBS in 1934, *U.S.S. Majestic*. <sup>3</sup> Oles was known internationally as "The American Violinist," and locally as "Professor." Both he and May, a pianist, taught music in Boulder, but it appears neither was ever employed by the university.







The Oles' move to Boulder in April 1907 coincided with the death of A. J. Macky on June 7<sup>th</sup> of that year. In his will, Macky donated \$300,000 to the university for the construction of the auditorium that now bears his name. May contested the will, and during the protracted lawsuit she produced a contract, possibly forged, between her father, John Bradford, and Macky promising her a third of the latter's estate. It was during this period, from approximately 1911 until c. 1915, that the Oles' lived in the house at 428

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Demolition Memo, 428 Pleasant, Aug. 21, 2002.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Concert playbill (left), Daily Camera library

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Undated obituary, 1935, Daily Camera library

Pleasant. Mr. and Mrs. Oles later resided at 2439 6th Street (1916-1936). Following Mr. Oles' death in 1935, Mrs. Oles lived at 702 Spruce Street until she died in 1953.

After ten years of short-term renters, Jacob and Katherine Foos, immigrants from Germany and Russia respectively, moved to 428 Pleasant from Windsor, CO in 1924. Foos promptly began working for Public Service Company of Colorado. James J. Blain bought the house in 1927 and lived there until at least 1932. After a period of turnover and vacancy, police sergeant Harold A. Stewart and his wife, Leona Blanot Stewart, had two daughters while living in the house during the 1940s. Leona's parents, Jesse and Frances Blanot purchased the house from Blain in 1944.

Recently divorced, Leah M. Arnold bought 428 Pleasant in 1947 and moved in with her sons Donald and Steven. Upon his return from military service in 1961, Don lived in the house with his German bride, Elfrieda Mai Arnold, and had three children there. Don bought the house from his mother in 1964. Members of the Arnold family were the longest-term residents of 428 Pleasant, from 1947 through 1971.

Forrest W. Williams, a professor of philosophy at CU since 1952, bought the house in 1972 and lived there two years. The house was largely vacant until the 1990s. The current owner purchased the house in 2004.

#### CRITERIA FOR THE BOARD'S DECISION:

Section 9-11-23(f), B.R.C. 1981, provides that the Landmarks Board "shall consider and base its decision upon any of the following criteria:

- (1) The eligibility of the building for designation as an individual landmark consistent with the purposes and standards in Sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981;
- (2) The relationship of the building to the character of the neighborhood as an established and definable area;
- (3) The reasonable condition of the building; and
- (4) The reasonable projected cost of restoration or repair.

When considering the condition of the building and the projected cost of restoration or repair as set forth in paragraphs (3) and (4) above, the board may not consider deterioration caused by unreasonable neglect.

As detailed below, staff considers this property is potentially eligible for designation as an individual landmark.

#### CRITERION 1: INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY

The following is a result of staff's research of the property relative to the significance criteria for individual landmarks as adopted by the Landmarks Board on Sept. 17, 1975. See Attachment E: Individual Landmark Significance Criteria

**Summary:** 428 Pleasant is historically significant under criteria 1 and 2 as the residence of Moina May Bradford Macky Rooney Oles, the adopted daughter of pioneer Andrew Macky, and her husband, internationally known violinist and composer George W. Oles.

#### 1. Date of Construction: c. 1908

The addition was platted in 1902 and the lot was sold to developer Henry Sahm the same year. The house first appears in city directories in 1908.

### 2. Association with Historical Persons or Events: May and George Oles

Elaboration: This building is associated with May Oles and her husband, G. W. Oles. The Oles resided at this house during Mrs. Oles notorious lawsuit concerning her adoptive father's estate, which delayed the construction of Macky Auditorium on the University of Colorado campus for several years. This building's association with violinist and composer G. W. Oles demonstrates the early cultural growth of the community.

#### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

**Summary**: The residence at 428 Pleasant is architecturally significant under criteron 1 as an example of a working-class vernacular house from the turn of the twentieth century.

1. Recognized Period/Style: National Folk, pyramidal (equilateral hipped) substyle.

**Elaboration:** The form and features of 428 Pleasant are typical of the "Pyramidal" substyle of post-railroad National Folk housing as described in McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*. The house clearly exhibits the pyramidal National Folk form, evidenced by its steep roof pitch, attic dormer, central chimney, nearly-square floor plan, prominent front porch and simple ornamentation<sup>4</sup> Due to the steep slope of Pleasant Street, this house features an unusually high front entry, a rubble masonry foundation of local stone, and a retaining wall that matches the foundation.

<sup>4</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1984) p. 100-101.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

**Summary:** The property at 428 Pleasant is environmentally significant under criteria 1 and 4 for its site features and its status as a contributing element to the potential expanded Highland Lawn Historic District.

- **1. Site Characteristics:** The stone retaining walls at the front of the lot utilize local stone.
- **2. Environmental Appropriateness:** This section of Highland Lawn featured modest, vernacular houses built for working class families at the edge of town. This house would contribute to a potential Highland Lawn Historic District.

#### CRITERION 2: RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHARACTER OF THE

**NEIGHBORHOOD:** The house is an example of the turn-of-the-twentieth century, vernacular houses found in the area. The property is located in the potential expanded Highland Lawn Historic District.

# CRITERION 3: CONDITION OF THE BUILDING AND CRITERION 4: PROJECTED COST OF RESTORATION OR REPAIR:

No information regarding the condition of the building or cost of restoration was included with the application.

#### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENT:**

Staff has not received any communications regarding the demolition permit request for this property.

#### THE BOARD'S DECISION:

If the Landmarks Board finds that the building to be demolished does not have significance under the criteria set forth in section 9-11-23(f), B.R.C. 1981, the city manager shall issue a demolition permit.

If the Landmarks Board finds that the building to be demolished may have significance under the criteria set forth above, the application shall be suspended for a period not to exceed 180 days from the date the permit application was accepted by the city manager as complete, in order to provide the time necessary to consider alternatives to the demolition of the building (section 9-11-23(h), B.R.C. 1981). A 180-day stay period would expire on January 6, 2013.

#### **FINDINGS:**

Staff recommends that the Landmarks Board adopt the following findings:

A stay of demolition for the house at 426 Pleasant Street is appropriate based on the criteria set forth in section 9-11-23(f), B.R.C. 1981 in that the property:

- 1. May be eligible for individual landmark designation based upon its historic and architectural significance;
- 2. Contributes to the character of the neighborhood as an intact representative of the area's past;
- 3. It has not been demonstrated to be impractical or economically unfeasible to rehabilitate the building.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- A: Historic Building Inventory Form
- B: Site Plan
- C: Boulder County Tax Assessor Card c.1938
- D: Existing Condition Photographs
- E: Significance Criteria

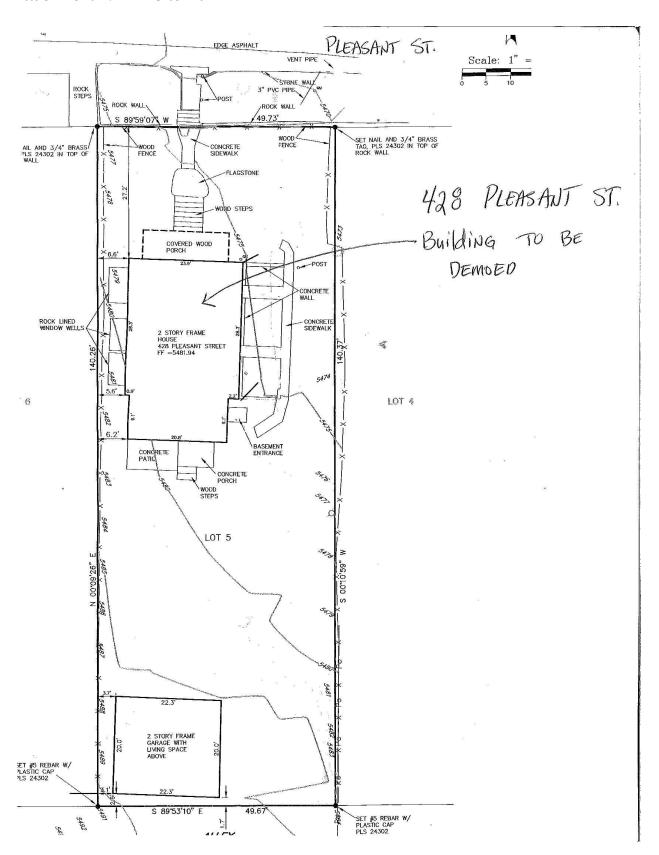
# Attachment A: Historic Building Inventory Form

| .ORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY ice of Archaeology and Historic Preservation 10 Broadway, Denver, Colorado 80203 STORIC BUILDING INVENTORY RECORD   |   | =   | NOT FOR FIELD USE Eligible Nominated Det. Not Eligible Certified Rehab. Date  |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| PROJECT NAME: Boulder Survey of Historic<br>Places, 1994  | COUNTY:<br>Boulder                      | CITY:<br>Boulder  | STATE 1D NO.: 58L4743   |  |
|   |   |   | TEMPORARY NO.: 1461-36-1-38-005   |  |
| TURRENT BUILDING NAME:  | OWNER: WILLIAMS 428 PLEA BOULDER        | ASANT ST  | ,   |  |
| DDRESS: 428 PLEASANT ST<br>BOULDER, CO 80302  | TOWNSHIP IN                             | RANGE 71W   | SECTION 36 NE 1/4 SW 1/4  |  |
| HISTORIC NAME:  | U.S.G.S. QUAD                           | U.S.G.S. QUAD NAME: Boulder, Colo.<br>YEAR: 1966 (PR1979) X 7.5' 15 |   |  |
| DISTRICT NAME:  | BLOCK: 5<br>ADDITION: Verm              |   | OT(S): 5 YR. OF ADDITION: 1902  |  |
| FILM ROLL NO.: 94-13 NEGATIVE NO.: 24A  | LOCATION OF NE<br>Boulder City P        |   | DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: ESTIMATE: 1900 ACTUAL: SOURCE:  |  |
| ATTACH PHOTOGRAPH HER   | E                                       |   | USE: PRESENT: Residential  HISTORIC: Residential  CONDITION: EXCELLENT X GOOD FAIR DETERIORATING  EXTENT OF ALTERATIONS: MINOR X MODERATE MAJOR DESCRIBE: POrch walls new; new Stairs and railing; some window alterations. |  |
| STYLE: Vernacular Wood Frame  |   | STORIES:  | ORIGINAL SITE X MOVED DATE(S) OF MOVE:  |  |
| NATERIALS: Wood, Stone  |   | SQ. FOOTAGE:<br>1572  | NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY   |  |
| ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION: One-story frame dwelling with drop siding and corn overhanging, enclosed eaves. Front, hipped roof d windows. Hipped roof porch with spindle supports Double-hung, 1/1 light windows with wooden surroun | ormer with shingle<br>atop solid wooden | s, paired   | INDIVIDUAL: YES X NO CONTRIBUTING TO DISTRICT: YES NO LOCAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION: NO NAME: DATE:  ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS? YES X NO TYPE:  |  |
| 8   |   | ES X NO   | IF INVENTORIED, LIST ID NOS.:   |  |

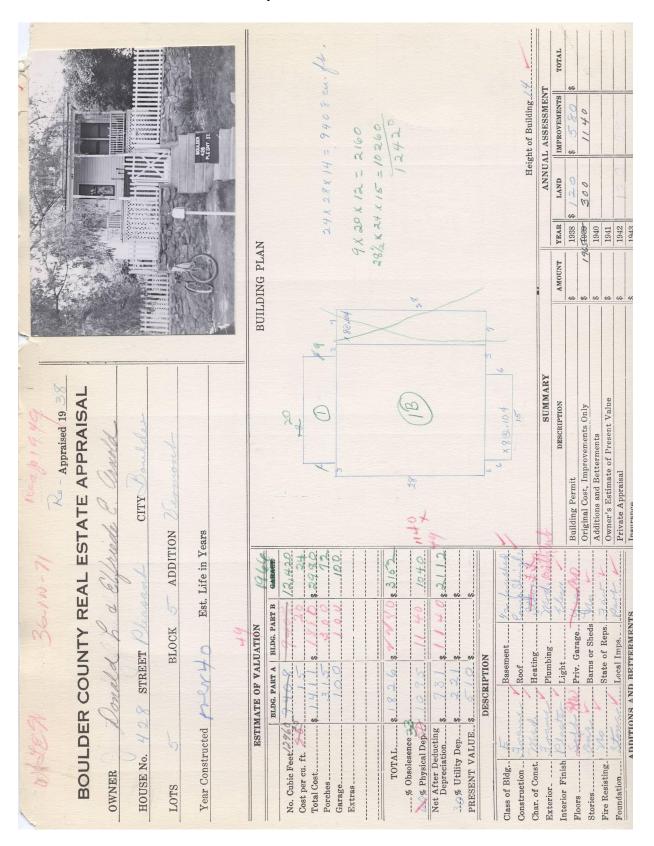
| PLAN SHAPE:  | ARCHITECT:                          | STATE ID NO.: 58L4743   |            |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|------------|
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|  |                                     | THEME(S):   |            |
| <del>┤╎┤╎╎╎╎┞</del>  | SOURCE:                             | Urban Residential Neighb  | orhoods,   |
|  | ]                                   | 1858-present  |            |
| ONSTRUCTION HISTORY (DESCRIPTION, NAMES, DATE  | S, ETC., RELATING TO MAJOR ALTERATI | ONS TO ORIGINAL STRUCTURE):   |            |
| 2 2  | (*)                                 | * **  |            |
|  |                                     | 10.5  |            |
|  |                                     |   |            |
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| REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER  |                                     | TATED WITH SIGNIFICANT PERSONS  |            |
| POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES X REPRESENTS A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD  |                                     | STATED WITH SIGNIFICANT EVENTS OR<br>SIBUTES TO AN HISTORIC DISTRICT                |            |
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Attachment B: Site Plan



Attachment C: Boulder County Tax Assessor Card c.1938



# Attachment D: Existing Condition Photographs



north facing side of 428 pleasant



north and east side

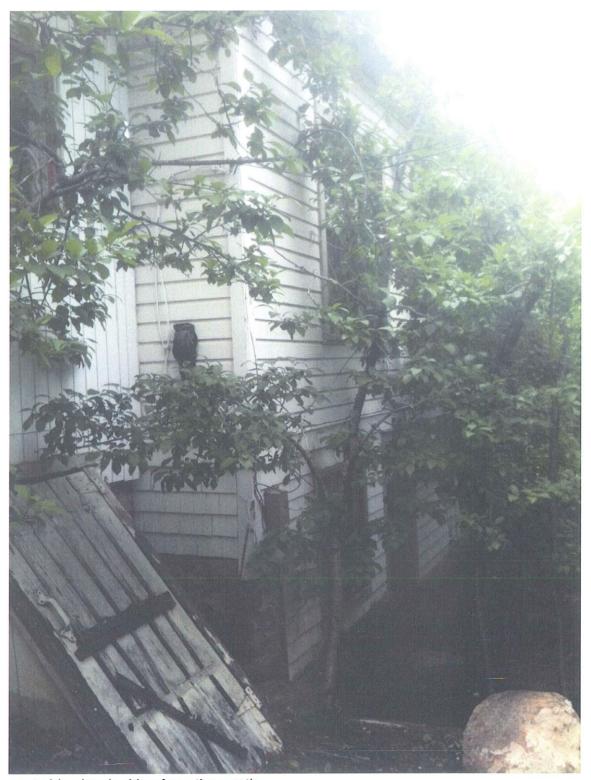


west side view looking from the south, picture doesn't show movement of exterior wall from settling.





(date unknown) that has settled, with major foundation and structural dama

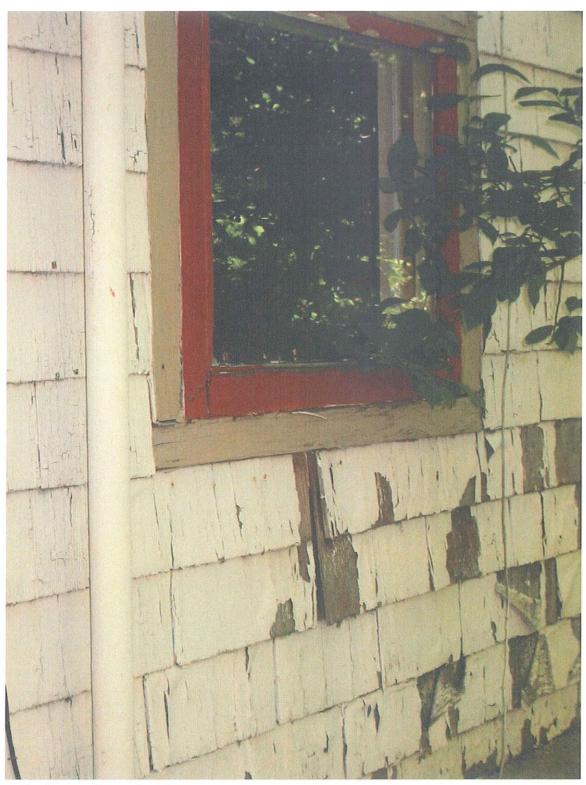


east side view looking from the south

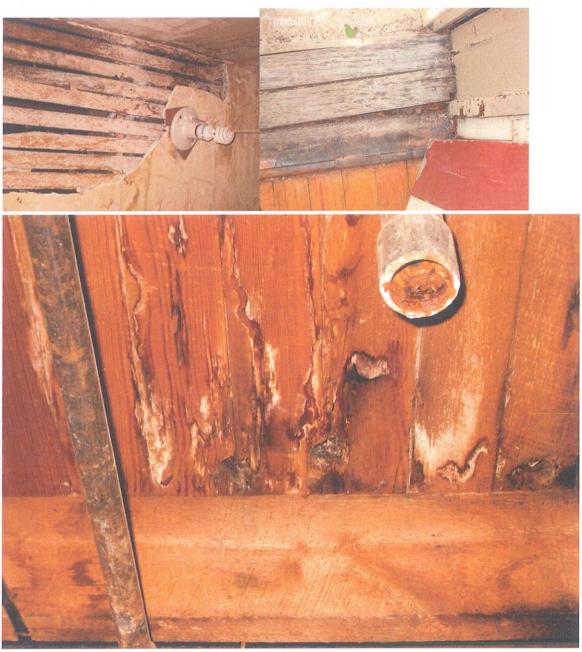


significant exterior damage, roof and siding

east view,



exterior wall east side



water damage throughout house





the four original double hung windows are severely dry rot with cracked glass (18 windows total in house)





settling of house has caused structural and interior damage



house is built on rubble foundation, building settled 5.5 inches on west side, building settled 3.5 inches in center



Memo to Landmarks Board 08/07/2013 Re: 428 Pleasant Street Demolition Permit

Attachment E: Significance Criteria

#### SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA Individual Landmark September 1975

On September 6, 1975, the City Council adopted Ordinance #4000 providing procedures for the designation of Landmarks and Historic Districts in the City of Boulder. The purpose of the ordinance is the preservation of the City's permitted cultural, historic, and architectural heritage. The Landmarks Board is permitted by the ordinance to adopt rules and regulations as it deems necessary for its own organization and procedures. The following Significance Criteria have been adopted by the board to help evaluate each potential designation in a consistent and equitable manner.

#### **Historic Significance**

The place (building, site, area) should show character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the community, state or nation; be the site of a historic, or prehistoric event that had an effect upon society; or exemplify the cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the community.

<u>Date of Construction</u>: This area of consideration places particular importance on the age of the structure.

<u>Association with Historical Persons or Events:</u> This association could be national, state, or local.

<u>Distinction in the Development of the Community of Boulder:</u> This is most applicable to an institution (religious, educational, civic, etc) or business structure, though in some cases residences might qualify. It stresses the importance of preserving those places which demonstrate the growth during different time spans in the history of Boulder, in order to maintain an awareness of our cultural, economic, social or political heritage.

<u>Recognition by Authorities:</u> If it is recognized by Historic Boulder, Inc. the Boulder Historical Society, local historians (Barker, Crossen, Frink, Gladden, Paddock, Schooland, etc), State Historical Society, <u>The Improvement of Boulder, Colorado</u> by F.L. Olmsted, or others in published form as having historic interest and value.

Other, if applicable.

#### **Architectural Significance**

The place should embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, a good example of the common; be the work of an architect or master builder, known nationally, state-wide, or locally, and perhaps whose work has influenced later development; contain elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or be a fine example of the uncommon.

Recognized Period/Style: It should exemplify specific elements of an architectural period/style, i.e.: Victorian, Revival styles, such as described by *Historic American Building Survey Criteria*, Gingerbread Age (Maass), 76 Boulder Homes (Barkar), The History of Architectural Style (Marcus/Wiffin), Architecture in San Francisco (Gebhard et al), History of Architecture (Fletcher), Architecture/Colorado, and any other published

source of universal or local analysis of a style.

<u>Architect or Builder of Prominence:</u> A good example of the work of an architect or builder who is recognized for expertise in his field nationally, state-wide, or locally.

<u>Artistic Merit:</u> A skillful integration of design, material, and color which is of excellent visual quality and/or demonstrates superior craftsmanship.

<u>Example of the Uncommon:</u> Elements of architectural design, details, or craftsmanship that are representative of a significant innovation.

<u>Indigenous Qualities:</u> A style or material that is particularly associated with the Boulder area.

Other, if applicable.

## **Environmental Significance**

The place should enhance the variety, interest, and sense of identity of the community by the protection of the unique natural and man-made environment.

Site Characteristics: It should be of high quality in terms of planned or natural vegetation.

<u>Compatibility with Site:</u> Consideration will be given to scale, massing placement, or other qualities of design with respect to its site.

<u>Geographic Importance:</u> Due to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, it represents an established and familiar visual feature of the community.

<u>Environmental Appropriateness:</u> The surroundings are complementary and/or it is situated in a manner particularly suited to its function.

<u>Area Integrity:</u> Places which provide historical, architectural, or environmental importance and continuity of an existing condition, although taken singularly or out of context might not qualify under other criteria.